

ABSTRACT

An orientation system for vegetables includes a plurality of rotating rollers that both pull the vegetable into an inverted position, with leafy top down, and advance the vegetable along the length of the rollers to deliver the vegetables to a cutting system. The orientation system may be included in a vegetable harvester and topper or may be used separate from the harvester vehicle. The orientation system preferably has a plurality of orientation roller pairs, made up of first and second counter-rotating orientation rollers. These rollers may include strips of elastomeric fingers or other protrusions that engage the leafy top and pull it downward. Preferably, one of the rollers may also have a vegetable advancing spiral that moves the vegetables in “auger-style” by pushing the vegetables along in front of the rotating spiral. These rollers deliver the vegetables to the cutting system in the inverted position, so that the leafy top, when cut off, falls down to a trash removal system and the vegetable roots/bulbs’ momentum carries them past the cutting system into another portion of the harvester for further processing or collection.